A Comparison of Design Thinking in Architecture and Industrial Design

**Architecture**

- **Problem types**
  - Ill-defined problems (Rowe 40)
    - The end and means of the solution are unknown at the beginning of the process, but a final solution can be found.

- **Disposition**
  - Convergent Thinking (Guilford 469)
    - Narrows down solutions to find the ‘correct’ or ‘best’ answer.

- **Shared methods**
  - Backtracking (Rowe 34)
    - As the design process gets underway architects or designers don’t have a set way of solving problems. They may start or end in a certain place, but their means of getting to a final solution will never be the same.

- **Solution space**
  - A Solution Must Be Found (Rowe 45)
    - A building is most often the only viable way to address the clients’ needs and the building must be ready to occupy by a certain time. And so, a design, even if it is only “good enough” must be found.

**Industrial Design**

- **Problem types**
  - Wicked problems (Rowe 41)
    - Wicked problems are “without a definitive formulation.” They cannot be fully defined and may have more than one solution. The process of addressing a wicked problem may not have a definitive stopping point.

- **Disposition**
  - Divergent Thinking (Guilford 469)
    - Exploring different and unique ideas to solutions.

- **Shared methods**
  - Non-linear (Rowe 56)
    - As the design process gets underway architects and designers don’t have a set way of solving problems. They may start or end in a certain place, but their means of getting to a final solution will never be the same.

- **Solution space**
  - A Solution Continuously Evolves (Rowe 41)
    - Industrial designers can design a product and have it manufactured or sold, but the product can be redesigned, or another product can be made to solve a different problem.

---

**Works Cited:**